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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to describe a typical Texas teacher, a study was conducted to establish baseline data in conjunction with the Texas State Teachers Association. In May 1990, a questionnaire with 78 discrete questions, 3 continuous data questions, and 1 open-ended question was sent to 560 teachers. The return rate was 40 percent. The results include a profile of the Texas teacher which details 42 characteristics. The typical Texas teachers were found to be family persons, married with two children, conservative, healthy, law-abiding, and happy with themselves. Teachers favor pro-choice in the abortion issue, belong to a church, do not drink or take drugs. Most have a gun at home, favor corporal punishment and capital punishment, work in safe schools, and have experienced no personal crime at school. They work in their room during planning periods, prefer a male principal, have a savings account, and live within five miles of their workplace. They feel they have not been trained to work with mainstreamed children. The questionnaire is appended. (JD)

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Profile of Texas Teachers:
A Study of the Characteristics of Texas Teachers in 1990

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Profile of Texas Teachers

Overview

How would you describe a Texas teacher? What are their feelings, do they live close to school or have they taught in another state? This study attempted to establish baseline data on the Texas teacher by working closely with the Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA) and using their membership list.

Research Design

In May, 1990 a questionnaire with seventy-eight discrete questions, three continuous data questions and one open ended question was mailed to a Nth systematic sample of the TSTA membership. This mailing included a total of 560 questionnaires. The return rate was 40%. No follow-up mailing was conducted. The questionnaires were answered on a Scantron Form 882. The data were analyzed during the summer of 1990 using an IBM clone and a data analysis package entitled "Scanner Program with Cross-tab Utility from a company called ISD, Inc. in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Summary of Major Conclusions

The typical profile of a Texas teacher in this sample included the following characteristics.

1. Only 13% have been married more than one time.
2. Seventy-two percent were in their 30s or 40s and 63% have two or three children.
3. An overwhelming 88% of the teachers do no smoke and 52% report they do not drink alcoholic beverages.
4. Fourteen percent report they have contemplated suicide, 22% have visited a psychologist and 55% report life is exciting to them.
5. Only nine percent report high blood pressure problems, 19% report having trouble sleeping and 11% report trying illegal drugs.
6. Sixty-five percent do not exercise regularly and 35% are more than 20 pounds over weight.
7. Ninety-seven percent of the teachers have never been arrested.
8. An overwhelming 71% describe their learning style as visual.
9. Nineteen percent of the teachers report missing five or more days of school in the past year.
10. A majority (62%) of the teachers live in the districts where they teach.

11. Eighty-nine percent of the teachers live in a house, 10% in an apartment and none reported living in a mobile home.
12. Thirty-two percent of the teachers have parents living within 50 miles of their home, and 32% live within 50 miles of their childhood home.
13. An overwhelming 82% of the teachers own or are buying their own home, 64 % of them eat out five or more times per month with one in five (22%) eating out 10 or more times per month.
14. Teachers favor pro-choice on abortion (64%).
15. Nine percent are left handed and 31% watch less than five hours of TV per week.
16. Ninety-six percent of the teachers consider themselves happy or very happy people. However, 40% would not select teaching as their career again. Fourteen percent have a spouse that teachers.
17. Ninety percent of the teachers report they were not a victim of a school crime this year.
18. The typical teacher came from a home where the parents had a high school education (61% of mothers and 62% of fathers).
19. Almost half of all teachers have a computer at home (42%).
20. All were certified, 26% attended college in the past year and seven percent were in the military.
21. Eighty percent are a member of an organized church and 42% consider themselves to be conservative, while 37% consider themselves to be middle of the road.
22. One in four teachers (25%) belong to a civic club and 83% voted in 1990 with 49% voting Democrat.
23. Interestingly, 18% of the teachers are bilingual and 91% have a savings account.
24. Fifty-four percent of the teachers have six or more hours of homework to grade each week.
25. A majority of teachers (54%) have a gun in their home.
26. Twenty-one percent report someone in their building has a drinking problem and six percent report a staff member in their building has a drug problem.
27. One third (30%) of the teachers have reported a child abuse case in the past two years and 97% have not been sued in the past two years.
28. Sixty-five percent of the teachers work in schools that permits corporal punishment while 74% of the teachers support the use of corporal punishment. When capital punishment was questioned, 81% of the teachers favor capital punishment.
29. Sixty percent of the teachers report they are not trained for Mentally Retarded or Emotionally Disturbed students to be mainstreamed in their class.
30. Only 10% of the teachers drive a new car and 21% drive a car six years old or older. Twenty-five percent drive a foreign car.

31. Eighty-nine percent believe paper work to be increasing and 64% find their students parents supportive. A strong 77% find the administration supportive.
32. Fifty percent of all teachers live within five miles of their school.
33. When creation-evolution theory was questioned, 67% of the teachers believe in Creation, 25% in evolution and 8 percent other.
34. Eighty-four percent of all Texas teachers have taught in no more than three school districts, while four percent have worked in five or more districts.
35. Five percent of all Texas teachers do not own a credit card and 52% have up to five.
36. An overwhelming, 86% of all teacher are not afraid to be in their school building after 4:00 P.M.
37. Nine percent of the teachers report physical abuse and 45% report verbal abuse in their school setting.
38. Sexual abuse by a school administrator is not common with only five percent every having a problem.
39. Eighty-two percent of all teachers report spending their planning period in their classroom each day, not in the faculty lounge.
40. Seventy-five percent of the teachers expect to teach until retirement.
41. Two thirds (67%) of all teachers prefer a male principal. Note: 87% of the respondents are female in this study, 78% are white, 14% Hispanic and eight percent Black.
42. When the teachers were asked to identify the most important issue in education. 21% reported parent/society support, 14% student discipline, 12% salary, nine percent funding, nine percent reforms/policies and a string of other items from communication/input to teacher training.

Summary

The typical Texas teachers is a family person, married with two children. They are conservative, vote, healthy, law abiding and happy with themselves. They favor pro-choice in the abortion issue, belong to a church, don't drink or take drugs. Most teachers have a gun at home, favor corporal punishment, capital punishment, work in safe schools and have experienced no personal crime at school. The teachers work in their room during their planning period, prefer a male principal, have a savings account and live within five miles of where they work. They feel they are not trained to work with mainstreamed children. In conclusion, the typical Texas teacher is a good model and a good citizen. They reflect a lot of the middle class valued in our society.

Characteristics of Texas Teachers - 1990

"One Most Important Issue to Improve Public Education"

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Parental/Societal Support	53	21%
Discipline	37	14%
Pay	32	12%
Funding	24	9%
Other (Curr, Reform, Politics)	23	9%
Career Ladder	16	6%
Input	15	6%
Teacher Morale	10	4%
Paperwork	9	3%
Class Size	7	3%
Back to Basics	8	3%
Lack of Motivation	6	2%
Insurance	5	2%
Testing	5	2%
Student Responsibility	5	2%
Teacher Training	5	2%
	260	100%

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April 1990

Dear Fellow Teachers:

The data generated by this questionnaire will provide a demographic picture of the Texas teacher. The enclosed questionnaire is a spinoff of the 1980-1990 statewide studies entitled "Teachers, Moonlighting, and Morale" that have gained state and national attention in newspapers and journals.

You were picked at random to participate in this study from a list of approximately 100,000 teachers in cooperation with the Texas State Teachers Association.

It is very important that you--

⇨ **1)** mark the SCANTRON 882 answer sheet with a #2 pencil for all 78 questions
⇨ **2)** answer the questions on the back of the questionnaire
⇨ **3)** RETURN the SCANTRON and
⇨ **4)** RETURN the questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

The results will be shared with the Texas Legislature, TSTA, and the news media.

Please answer every question. Add comments at the bottom of the back page of the questionnaire.

Please return the questionnaire **today**!!! Thanks for your time.

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Characteristics of Texas Teachers in 1990

Directions: Using a #2 pencil, mark the appropriate answer on the SCANTRON. NA means Not Applicable.

1. What is your sex? ..... (a) Male (b) Female
2. What is your race? ..... (a) White (b) Hispanic (c) Black (d) Other
3. What is your marital status? ..... (a) Married (b) Single (c) Other
4. Is this your first marriage? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
5. How would you describe your marriage? ..... (a) Happy (b) Average (C) Unhappy (d) NA
6. What is your age? ..... (a) 20's (b) 30's (c) 40's (d) 50's (e) 60's
7. Nu ber of children you have in your immediate family? ..... (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 4 (e) 5+
8. Do you smoke? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
9. Do you drink alcoholic beverages? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
10. In general, do you find life exciting, routine, or dull? ..... (a) Exciting (b) Routine (c) Dull
11. Have you ever contemplated suicide? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
12. Have you ever seen a psychologist? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
13. Do you take medicine for high blood pressure? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
14. Have you ever taken illegal drugs? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
15. Do you have trouble sleeping? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
16. Are you more than 20 pounds overweight? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
17. Do you exercise regularly? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
18. Have you ever been arrested? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
19. What is your primary learning style? ..... (a) Visual (b) Tactile (c) Auditory
20. Any serious medical problems in the past year? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
21. School days missed due to illness this year? ..... (a) <5 (b) 5-10 (c) >10
22. Do you live in the district where you teach? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
23. Do your children attend the same school district where you teach? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
24. In what type of housing do you live? ..... (a) House (b) Apartment (c) Mobile Home
25. Do your parents live within 50 miles of you? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
26. Do you live within 50 miles of your childhood home? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
27. Do you own your home? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
28. How often do you eat out each month? ..... (a) <5 (b) 5-10 (c) 10-20 (d) >20
29. Your attitude toward abortions? ..... (a) Pro-life (b) Pro-choice (c) No Opinion
30. Are you right or left handed? ..... (a) Right (b) Left
31. How may hours a week do you watch TV? ..... (a) 0-5 (b) 6-10 (c) 11-15 (d) 16-20 (e) 20+
32. How happy are you? ..... (a) Very Happy (b) Average (c) Unhappy
33. Have you been the victim of school-related crime this year? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
34. Would you choose to be a teacher if you could start over again? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
35. Does your spouse teach? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
36. Does your spouse earn more htan you do? ..... (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Applicable
37. Mother's highest educational level? ..... (a) HS (b) College (c) BS (d) MEd (e) PhD
38. Father's highest educational level? ..... (a) HS (b) College (c) BS (d) MEd (e) PhD
39. Do you have a computer at home? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
40. Have you attended college in the past 12 months? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
41. Are you a certified teacher or on an emergency certificate? ..... (a) Certified (b) Emergency
42. How do you rate your school's climate for learning? ..... (a) A (b) B (c) C (d) D (e) F
43. Are you a member of an organized church? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
44. Do you consider yourself to be conservative, liberal, or middle road? ..... (a) Conservative (b) Liberal (c) Middle Road
45. Do you belong to a civic club? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
46. How did you vote in the 1990 primary election? ..... (a) Democrat (b) Republican (c) No Vote
47. Do you have a savings account? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
48. Are you bilingual? ..... (a) Yes (b) No
49. How many hours of homework do you grade at home each week? ..... (a) 0-5 (b) 6-10 (c) 11-15 (d) 16+
50. Did/do you serve in the Armed Forces/National Guard? ..... (a) Yes (b) No

Continue answering questions #51-78 on the <u>back</u> of this sheet and match the SCANTRON!

51. Do you have a gun in the home?.....(a) Yes (b) No
52. Do you know teachers in your building with a drinking problem? .....(a) Yes (b) No
53. Do you know teachers in your building with a drug problem?.....(a) Yes (b) No
54. Have you reported a child abuse case in the past 2 years? .....(a) Yes (b) No
55. Have you been to court/sued in the past 2 years in a job related case?.....(a) Yes (b) No
56. Does your school permit corporal punishment?.....(a) Yes (b) No
57. Do you support corporal punishment?.....(a) Yes (b) No
58. Do you support capital punishment?.....(a) Yes (b) No
59. Prepared for mainstreaming MR and ED students into your class? .....(a) Yes (b) No
60. Age of car you drive to work?.....(a) New (b) 0-2 yrs (c) 3-5 yrs (d) 6+ yrs
61. Has there been an increase in your paperwork in the past five years? .....(a) Yes (b) No
62. Has your teaching improved since the career ladder? .....(a) Yes (b) No
63. Are the parents of your students supportive?.....(a) Yes (b) No
64. Are your administrators generally supportive?.....(a) Yes (b) No
65. How many miles round trip do you drive to and from work?.....(a) 0-10 (b) 11-20 (c) 21-30 (d) 30+
66. Do you believe in creation, evolution, or some other theory? .....(a) Creation (b) Evolution (c) Other
67. In how many different districts have you taught?.....(a) 1 (b) 2-3 (c) 4-5 (d) 5+
68. How many credit cards do you have?.....(a) None (b) 1-5 (c) 6-10 (d) 10+
69. Have you taught in other states? .....(a) Yes (b) No
70. Are you afraid to work in your building after 4:00 pm? .....(a) Yes (b) No
71. Have you been abused physically by students this semester?.....(a) Yes (b) No
72. Have you been abused verbally by students this semester?.....(a) Yes (b) No
73. Have you ever been sexually harassed by an administrator ?.....(a) Yes (b) No
74. Spend your conference period in the lounge or classroom?.....(a) Lounge (b) Classroom
75. Do you plan to stay in teaching until you retire?.....(a) Yes (b) No
76. Do you have a male or female principal? .....(a) Male (b) Female
77. Do you prefer a male or female principal?.....(a) Male (b) Female
78. Type of car you drive?.....(a) Domestic (b) Foreign

How much per month do <u>you pay</u> for your health insurance?

Employee Only? .....$ _____
Employee and Spouse? .....$ _____
Employee and Family?.....$ _____

What is the ONE most important issue that needs to be dealt with to improve public education? _____

Other Comments!